

**What is Claimed is:**

1. A method for identifying test agents that alter thyroid hormone metabolism or cholesterol and lipid metabolism comprising determining a test agent's ability to modulate expression or activity of an orphan nuclear receptor CAR.  
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2. A composition for alteration of thyroid hormone metabolism or cholesterol and lipid metabolism, said composition comprising an agent which modulates CAR expression or activity in a pharmaceutically acceptable formulation.  
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3. The composition of claim 2 wherein the agent inhibits or decreases CAR expression or activity.
4. A method for altering thyroid hormone metabolism in a subject comprising administering to a subject in need thereof the composition of claim 2.  
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5. A method for altering cholesterol and lipid metabolism in a subject comprising administering to a subject in need thereof the composition of claim 3.
- 20 6. A method for treating obesity, hypercholesterolemia or dyslipidemia in a subject comprising administering to a subject suffering from obesity, hypercholesterolemia or dyslipidemia the composition of claim 3.
- 25 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the subject is suffering from obesity and the composition comprising the agent which inhibits or decreases CAR expression or activity is administered in combination with an anti-obesity agent.